



Legislative Bulletin.....May 15, 2007

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Summary of the Bills Under Consideration Today

Total Number of New Government Programs: 1

Total Cost of Discretionary Authorizations: \$127 million over the 2008 – 2013 period

Effect on Revenue: \$0

Total Change in Mandatory Spending: \$2 million

Total New State & Local Government Mandates: 0

Total New Private Sector Mandates: 0

Number of Bills Without Committee Reports: 2

Number of Reported Bills that Don't Cite Specific Clauses of Constitutional Authority: 2

H.R. 634 — American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin (Moore, D-KS)

Order of Business: H.R. 634 is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 634 would direct the Secretary of Treasury to mint 350,000 \$1 silver coins designed by Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation for the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. The coins would be legal tender, minted in calendar year 2010.

The bill would express that it is the desire of Congress that "the coins minted under this Act should be struck at the United States Mint at West Point, New York, to the greatest extent possible."

All coins minted as a result of H.R. 634 would be sold at a surcharge of \$10, with proceeds distributed to the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation for the endowment to support the construction of American Veterans' Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington.

H.R. 634 lists the following findings:

- "The Armed Forces of the United States have answered the call and served with distinction around the world--from hitting the beaches in World War II in the Pacific and Europe, to the cold and difficult terrain in Korea, the steamy jungles of Vietnam, and the desert sands of the Middle East.
- "All Americans should commemorate those who come home having survived the ordeal of war, and solemnly honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their lives for their country.
- "All Americans should honor the millions of living disabled veterans who carry the scars of war every day, and who have made enormous personal sacrifices defending the principles of our democracy.
- "In 2000, Congress authorized the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.
- "The United States should pay tribute to the Nation's living disabled veterans by minting and issuing a commemorative silver dollar coin.
- "The surcharge proceeds from the sale of a commemorative coin would raise valuable funding for the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial."

Committee Action: H.R. 634 was introduced on January 23, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Financial Services, which took no official action

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO score for H.R. 634 is not available.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is not available. However, House Rule XIII, Section 3(d)(1), requires that all committee reports contain “a statement citing the *specific* powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution.” *[emphasis added]*.

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H.R. 692 — Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Federal Flag Code Amendment Act of 2007 (*Stupak, D-MI*)

Order of Business: H.R.692 is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 692 would amend Title 4 of United States Code to allow the governors of states, territories, U.S. possessions, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia, to order that the American flag be lowered to half-staff following the death of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces. The bill would require that when such a pronouncement is made by a governor, that all flags flown at a federal building or facility within that state or territory be flown at half-staff.

Additional Information: Title 4, Section 7 of U.S. Code outlines the circumstance and procedures for flying the United States flag at half-staff. Proper circumstances listed in the section include the death of a current or former president, Supreme Court justice, member of Congress, and governor. In addition, the flag may be flown at half-staff in the honor of anyone’s death at the behest of the president.

According to Committee Report [110 – 139](#), this particular legislation was drafted after Rep. Bart Stupak sent a letter to President Bush asking that flags in his district be lowered to half-staff in order to honor Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks, who was killed in Iraq on July 8, 2006. While Stupak did not receive any word from the President, Michigan’s governor, Jennifer Granholm, ordered that the flags be lowered at every state building. In addition, per an executive order from the governor, Michigan flags have flown at half-staff for slain active duty service members since December 11, 2003.

The fact that Michigan, along with several other states, have been flying flags at half-staff for service members killed overseas, without any instruction from the President, has been an issue of some debate. According to [Granholm’s proclamation](#), “It is appropriate that that the flag of the United States of America be flown at half-staff throughout the State of Michigan and at half-mast on Michigan waters as a mark of respect for the memory and in honor of the service of members of our Armed Forces killed in the line of duty.”

Others local officials, however, have argued that the gesture is politically motivated and have refused to lower flags ([“Half-staff flag order sparks debate,”](#) The Oakland Press). H.R. 692 would settle the question by allowing governors to authorize the lowering of flags.

Committee Action: H.R. 692 was introduced on January 24, 2007, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, which referred the bill to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties on March 1, 2007. On April 20, 2007, the subcommittee discharged the bill without taking any official action. A mark-up was held by the Judiciary Committee on April 25, 2007, and H.R. 692 was amended and reported by voice vote that same day.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, “Because the U.S. flag is displayed daily at federal facilities, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 692 would have no significant cost.”

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: Committee Report 110 – 139 cites Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution.

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H.R. 916 — John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007 (*Scott, D-GA*)

Order of Business: H.R. 916 is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 916 would **create a new grant program** to repay the federal student loans of *lawyers* working either as prosecutors or public defenders. The new program would be authorized at \$25 million per year through 2013.

In order to receive loan repayments, the attorney must sign an agreement to remain as a prosecutor or public defender for at least three years. If the attorney leaves the position of prosecutor or public defender voluntarily or because of misconduct, he would be required to repay any benefits received. If the amount is not paid, the government would be authorized to use legal recovery methods. Attorneys could receive up to \$10,000 annually and a maximum of \$60,000 to repay their loans.

Awards granted to lawyers under this **new program** would be decided on a first-come, first-served basis. If additional priority must be given because of the availability of

appropriations, the Attorney General would give preference to attorneys that received repayments the previous year or borrowers that have not completed the three year obligation.

Additional Information: According to a [letter from the American Bar Association](#), which supports H.R. 916, “More than 80% of law students borrow to finance their education, and for 2006 the average accumulated debt load was \$54,509 for public law school and \$83,181 for private. By contrast, starting salaries for state and local prosecutors was \$46,000 and for public defenders it was \$43,000.”

Other statistics, however, show that the demand for lawyers in America is very high, as are the average starting salaries. According to a [Forbes Magazine article](#), the mean average salary for lawyers in the United States was \$110,000 in 2006. 2002 statistics from Cornell University’s [Career Services](#) provide further insight into the salaries that law students can expect **just after graduation**:

- “The **average starting salary was \$72,308**;
- “About 22% of salaries reported were at or below \$40,000;
- “Salaries of more than \$75,000 accounted for about 38% of salaries reported;
- “Approximately 58% of the class chose private practice in law firms;
- “About 27% took positions in public service, including judicial clerkships, government agencies, and public interest organizations;
- “Graduates entering business accounted for just under 11%; and
- “Approximately 30% of graduates were employed in positions for which bar passage is not required” (*emphasis added*).

Possible Conservative Concerns: Some conservatives may be concerned that H.R. 916 authorizes \$125 million in grants to repay law school loans for practicing attorneys. Conservatives may also be concerned that the legislation would provide loan repayment of up to \$60,000 per attorney, which is more than 100 percent of an average law graduate’s debt, according to the American Bar Association. Some conservatives may also contend that attorneys, whether practicing in the public or private sector, make enough money to repay college loans without government assistance.

Committee Action: H.R. 916 was introduced on February 8, 2007, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, which referred the bill to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security on March 1, 2007. On April 26, 2007, the subcommittee held a mark up and reported the bill to the full committee by voice vote. On May 2, 2007, the Committee on the Judiciary held a mark-up and reported H.R. 916 by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, H.R. 916 will authorize \$25 million in FY 2008 and \$125 million over a five year period.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of Government?: Yes. H.R. 916 creates a new federal grant program to repay loans of law school graduates working as prosecutors and public defenders.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: The committee report cites constitutional authority in Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution, but fails to cite a specific clause. However, House Rule XIII, Section 3(d)(1), requires that all committee reports contain “a statement citing the *specific* powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution” [*emphasis added*].

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H.Res. 263 — Recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity for Congress to improve the foster care system throughout the United States (*Cardoza, D-CA*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 263 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 263 would express that the Congress should:

- “Provide Federal adoption assistance to children adopted from the foster care system, including guardianship assistance.
- “Provide sufficient funds to States and units of local government to ensure that all levels of government are protecting foster children, including by hiring enough skilled caseworkers to track the progress of every child in the foster care system.
- “Provide sufficient funds for State and local court systems to improve oversight of foster care programs and to protect children in their jurisdiction by
 - “creating more meaningful opportunities for children and parents to participate in court proceedings, including the provision of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for every child in the foster care system;
 - “training court personnel alone and in conjunction with child welfare agency staff and others involved in protecting and caring for children; and
 - “collaborating with child welfare agencies to collect and share all relevant data and information that will assist appropriate government officials in making better decisions leading to more positive outcomes for children in foster care programs.
- “Increase the quantity of qualified attorneys who practice before courts with jurisdiction over children in foster care by—
 - “requiring that States adopt standards of practice, preparation, education, and compensation for these attorneys;
 - “supporting student loan forgiveness programs and other efforts to encourage qualified attorneys to practice in this area; and
 - “encouraging law schools, bar associations, and law firms to build a pool of qualified attorneys to practice in this area.

- “Ensure that improving the foster care system remains a top priority for both Congress and the Nation.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity to recognize the important role that the foster care system plays in the lives of the more than 500,000 children currently in foster care programs throughout the United States;
- approximately 50 percent of foster care children have been placed in foster care programs for longer than 1 year;
- 25 percent of foster care children have been placed in foster care programs for at least 3 years;
- children in foster care programs for longer periods of time often experience worse outcomes than children in foster care programs for shorter periods of time;
- children in foster care programs are more likely than the general population to become teen parents, to rely on public assistance as adults, to become homeless, and to experience mental health disorders at a higher rate;
- less than half of the children in foster care programs who are available for adoption each year are adopted;
- there are 119,000 children eligible for adoption every year who do not get adopted;
- a stable home is critical to a child’s development; and
- every child deserves to be raised by a loving family.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 263 was introduced on March 6, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.R. 1773 — Safe American Roads Act of 2007 (*Boyda, D-KS*)

Order of Business: H.R. 1773 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.R. 1773 prohibits motor carriers based Mexico from traveling beyond the U.S. municipalities and commercial zones on the U.S.-Mexico border, except under a three year pilot program.

Under the pilot program, Mexico based motor carriers would have to comply with requirements of section 350 of Public Law 107-87 and the requirements of section 31315(c) of title 49, United States Code. This requires drug and alcohol testing, hours of service, verification of proof of insurance, and a number of other safety regulations—22 in total—to be met by Mexico based motor carriers.

H.R. 1773 also prohibits motor carriers based in Mexico from operating beyond the U.S.-Mexico border, unless U.S. based motor carriers are allowed similar treatment. The number of Mexico based motor vehicles allowed to participate in the pilot program could not exceed 1,000.

The Secretary is to publish in the Federal Register a rule to carry out this legislation, including specific metrics to evaluate the safety consequences of the pilot program. The Secretary is also required to establish an independent review panel, composed of three individuals appointed by the Secretary, to monitor the program.

The Inspector General of the Department of the Transportation is required to monitor the pilot program and report back to the Secretary and the Congress within 12 and then 18 months of implementation of the pilot program.

Sixty days after termination of the pilot program, the Secretary is required to report back to Congress with the results of the program.

Committee Action: H.R. 1773 was introduced on March 29, 2007, and referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which approved the bill by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, H.R. 1773 authorizes \$2 million over the 2008 to 2012 period.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.R. 1505 — To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the “James A. Leach Federal Building Post Office Building” (*Loebsask, D-IA*)

Order of Business: H.R. 1505 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 1505 would designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the “James A. Leach Federal Building.”

Additional Information: Former Republican Congressman Jim Leach was born in Davenport, Iowa, in 1942, and graduated from Davenport High School in 1960. After graduating from Princeton in 1964, Leach attended Johns Hopkins University’s school of Advanced International Studies and also studied at the London School of Economics. Before his election to Congress in 1976, Leach worked for the State Department, the U.S. House, and the Office of Economic Opportunity. Leach served as a Representative from Iowa until 2006.

Committee Action: H.R. 1505 was introduced on March 13, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which referred the bill to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management. On May 2, 2007, the subcommittee held a mark-up and reported the bill to the full committee. On May 8, 2007, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure reported the bill by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO score of H.R. 1505 is unavailable, but the only costs associated with a post office renaming are those for sign and map changes, none of which significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Constitutional Authority: Although no committee report citing constitutional authority is available, Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to establish Post Offices and post roads.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.R. 1036 — To authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation (Young, R-AK)

Order of Business: H.R. 1036 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 1036 would require the Administrator of General Services to convey to the Alaska Railroad Corporation the GSA Fleet Management Center.

As consideration for this conveyance, the Alaska Railroad Corporation is required to either convey a replacement facility to GSA or pay the purchase price of the parcel (based on an independent appraisal commissioned by the GSA Administrator). If the Alaska Railroad Corporation purchases the parcel, the funds will be deposited in the Federal Buildings Fund.

Additional Information: According to House Report 110–145, the GSA Fleet Management Center is a 78,000-square-foot parcel of property in Anchorage, Alaska.

Committee Action: H.R. 1036 was introduced on February 13, 2007, and referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management. The full committee held a markup and approved the bill by voice vote on March 1, 2007.

Possible Conservative Concern: Some conservatives may be concerned that H.R. 1036 increases mandatory spending by \$2 million over the FY 2008 to FY 2012 period resulting in a PAYGO violation. In addition, some conservatives may be concerned that this legislation would be subject to a PAYGO violation point of order except for the fact it is being brought to the floor under suspension of the rules.

Note: RSC staff has received information that this PAYGO problem may be fixed on the floor but has not seen language to this effect yet.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to a CBO estimate, H.R. 1036 would increase direct spending by a net of \$2 million over the next five years.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

Constitutional Authority: Committee Report 110–145 cites Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, but does not cite a specific clause.

House Rule XIII, Section 3(d)(1), requires that all committee reports contain “a statement citing the *specific* powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution.” (*emphasis added*)

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H.Con.Res. 79 — Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby (*Hoyer, D-MD*)

Order of Business: H.Con.Res. 79 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 79 would allow the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association to use Capitol grounds to hold soap box derby races as a free event for the public on June 16, 2007.

Additional Information: According to committee report 110-133, the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby has been held on Capitol grounds since 1991. In addition, the race has “has attracted more than 50 participants each of those years.” The June 16, 2007, event would be open to participants between 8 and 17 years old who compete for scholarships and merchandise prizes. Winners from the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby will be given the opportunity to race in the All-American Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio.

Committee Action: H.Con.Res. 79 was introduced on March 5, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which referred the bill to the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management one day later. On May 2, 2007, the subcommittee held a mark-up and reported the bill to the full committee. On May 8, 2007, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure reported the bill by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Andy Koenig; andy.koenig@mail.house.gov; 202-226-9717.

H.Con.Res. 123 — Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run (*Del. Norton, D-DC*)

Order of Business: H.Con.Res. 123 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: The resolution authorizes the Capitol Police to design the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run course through the Capitol Grounds on June 8, 2007, or on a different date as determined by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate.

The Capitol Police Board is to carry out the event and enforce restrictions on sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the grounds in connection to the run.

Additional Information: The Law Enforcement Torch Run is a fundraiser intended to raise awareness about the Special Olympics. It is an actual running event in which law enforcement officers and athletes carry the Flame of Hope to the Opening Ceremonies. In addition to the running event, there are other fundraising activities, such as t-shirt sales, accepting donations, and charity golf events.

Committee Action: H.Con.Res. 123 was introduced on April 20, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which considered it, held a mark-up, and reported the bill by voice vote on May 8, 2007.

Cost to Taxpayers: According to CBO, the bill would not significantly affect the federal budget.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.Res. 352 — Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week (*Oberstar, D-MN*)

Order of Business: H.Res. 352 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res 352 expresses that the House of Representatives:

- “supports the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week;
- “recognizes and celebrates the important contributions that public works professionals make every day to improve the public infrastructure of the United States and the communities that those professionals serve; and
- “urges citizens and communities throughout the United States to join with representatives of the Federal Government in activities and ceremonies that are designed to pay tribute to the public works professionals of the Nation and to recognize the substantial contributions that public works professionals make to the Nation.”

The bill lists a number of findings, including the following:

- “public works infrastructure, facilities, and services play a pivotal role in the health, safety, and well-being of the people of the United States;
- “public works infrastructure, facilities, and services could not be provided without the skill and dedication of public works professionals, including engineers and

administrators, representing State and local governments throughout the United States;

- “the Department of Transportation estimates that every \$1,000,000,000 invested in the Nation's highway system creates 47,000 jobs, and every \$1 invested in the Nation's highway system generates more than six times that amount in economic activity;
- “since 1972 the Nation has invested more than \$250,000,000,000 in wastewater infrastructure facilities to establish a system that includes 16,000 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants, 100,000 major pumping stations, 600,000 miles of sanitary sewers, and 200,000 miles of storm sewers;
- “over the next 5 years, 8 airfield projects, including 5 runways, 2 runway extensions, and 1 airfield reconfiguration, will be commissioned providing some of the busiest airports in the Nation with the potential to accommodate more than 400,000 additional annual operations, while decreasing the average delay per operation at these airports by approximately 2 minutes;
- “in that report, the Department of Transportation found that to maintain highway, bridge, and transit networks, governments at all levels would need to invest \$94,600,000,000 per year for each of the next 20 years, and to improve highway, bridge, and transit networks that level of investment would need to increase to \$153,700,000,000 per year; and
- “public works professionals are observing National Public Works Week from May 20 through 26, 2007.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 352 was introduced on May 1, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which considered it, held a mark-up, and reported the resolution by voice vote on May 8, 2007.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.Res. 343 — Commemorating the marinas of the United States, expressing support for the designation of the sixth annual National Marina Day (Rogers, R-KY)

Order of Business: H.Res. 352 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res 352 expresses that the House of Representatives:

- “commemorates the marinas of the United States for providing environmentally friendly gateways to boating for the citizens of, and the visitors to the United States; and
- “supports designation of the sixth annual ‘National Marina Day’ in order--
 - “to honor the marinas of the United States for their many contributions to their local communities; and
 - “to make citizens, policy makers, elected officials, and employees more aware of the overall contributions marinas make to their well-being.”

The bill lists a number of findings, including the following:

- “the citizens of the United States highly value recreation time and their ability to access 1 of the greatest natural resources of the United States, its waterways;
- “in 1928, the word ‘marina’ was used for the first time by the National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers to define a recreational boating facility;
- “the United States is home to over 12,000 recreational boating facilities that contribute substantially to their local communities by providing safe, reliable gateways to boating for members of their communities and welcomed guests;
- “marinas of the United States also serve as stewards of the environment, actively seeking to protect their surrounding waterways not only for the enjoyment of the current generation, but for generations to come; and
- “marinas of the United States also provide their communities and visitors a place where friends and families, united by a passion for the water, can come together for recreation, rest, and relaxation.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 343 was introduced on April 26, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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H.Res. 386 — Recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week (Drake, R-VA)

Order of Business: H.Res. 386 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res 386 expresses that the House of Representatives:

- “supports initiatives for recreational boating safety education and accident prevention to minimize the number of annual recreational boating fatalities;
- “recognizes the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts each year during May to highlight the importance of safe recreational boating; and
- “supports the goals of National Safe Boating Week.”

The bill lists a number of findings, including the following:

- “recreational boating is one of our Nation’s most popular pastimes, with an estimated 78,000,000 recreational boaters in the United States and nearly 13,000,000 recreational vessels registered;
- “the number of recreational boating fatalities has declined by more than half since 1970, thanks to the increased use of life jackets, cooperative boating safety education, enforcement efforts between the Coast Guard and State governments, and safer vessels and equipment manufactured in accordance with Coast Guard standards;
- “recreational boating accidents have nevertheless claimed the lives of 697 Americans in 2005, more than half of whose lives could have been saved with the proper use of a personal flotation device;
- “a continued emphasis on accident prevention can reduce recreational boating fatalities still further, and in particular deaths by drowning, which remain the leading cause of recreational boating fatalities; and
- “the National Safe Boating Council, with the support of the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary, has proposed designating the week of May 19 through 25, 2007, as National Safe Boating Week.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 386 was introduced on May 9, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

RSC Staff Contact: Joelle Cannon; joelle.cannon@mail.house.gov; 202-226-0718.

H.R. 2292 — To prohibit the payment of bonuses to certain officers of the Department of Veterans Affairs unless fewer than 100,000 disability compensation claims are pending before the Department (*Hall, D-NY*)

Order of Business: H.R. 2292 is scheduled for consideration on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. 2292 would prevent senior political appointees at the Department of Veterans Affairs from receiving performance-based bonuses if more than 100,000 claims for disability compensation are currently pending.

Additional Information: According to a [2005 GAO report](#), “The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) continues to experience problems processing veterans’ disability compensation and pension claims... pending claims increased by about one-third from the end of fiscal year 2003 to the end of March 2005. Meanwhile, VA faces continuing questions about its ability to ensure that veterans get consistent decisions across its 57 regional offices.”

The report, however, specifies that many of the problems in distributing compensation are caused by factors outside the VA’s control. The report states that “history has shown that VA’s workload and performance is affected by factors such as the impacts of laws and court decisions affecting veterans’ benefit entitlement and the claims process, and the filing behavior of veterans.”

Committee Action: H.R. 2292 was introduced on May 14, 2007, and referred to the Committee on Veterans Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which took no further action.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO score for H.R. 2292 was not available.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is not available. However, House Rule XIII, Section 3(d)(1), requires that all committee reports contain “a statement citing the *specific* powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution” [*emphasis added*].

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**H.Res. 296 — Supporting the goals and ideals of National Eosin
Phil Awareness Week, and for other purposes
(Larson, D-CT)**

Order of Business: H.Res. 296 is scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Con.Res. 296 would express that the House:

- “supports the goals and ideals of National Eosinophil Awareness Week; and
- “encourages health care providers and the American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders to increase education and awareness regarding eosinophilic disorders.”

The resolution lists a number of findings, including:

- “the term ‘eosinophilic disorders’ is a general term used to describe a group of diseases and disorders caused by the production of too many white blood cells called eosinophils;
- “eosinophilic disorders patients suffer from their immune system attacking their body's own normal, healthy tissue, resulting in inflammation or swelling;
- “an estimated 50,000 people are affected by eosinophilic disorders in the United States, many of whom remain undiagnosed or misdiagnosed;
- “eosinophilic disorders cause chronic illness that significantly impacts a person’s quality of life and ability to attend school and work, and dramatically alters dietary lifestyles;
- “some eosinophilic disorders cause life-threatening and sometimes fatal illnesses by causing inflammation of the vital organs, such as the heart, lungs, kidney, and gastrointestinal tract;
- “eosinophilic disorders are difficult to diagnose and treatment is often delayed, resulting in unnecessary suffering;
- “some eosinophilic disorder patients will suffer permanent irreversible organ damage as a result of delays in diagnosis and proper treatment; and
- “the American Partnership For Eosinophilic Disorders has identified the third week of May as an appropriate time to recognize National Eosinophil Awareness Week in order to educate communities across the Nation about eosinophilic disorders and the need for research funding, accurate diagnosis, and effective treatments.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 296 was introduced on April 16, 2006 and referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, which took no official action.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution authorizes no expenditure.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government? No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates? No.

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